

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed November 7, 2006, for which a one-month extension of time to respond is hereby requested, in the nature of a requirement for restriction, has been carefully reviewed. Favorable consideration is respectfully requested.

Restriction has been required among what the Examiner considers to be patentably distinct species of the invention, as follows:

Group I(a), drawn to a method of treating hepatic disease, presently comprising claims 1, 4-6 and 22-24;

Group I(b), drawn to a method for improving liver function, presently comprising claims 1-3 and 7-11; and

Group I(c), drawn to a method of treating or improving a low albumin level, presently comprising claims 26-35.

Applicant hereby elects Group I (c), claims 26-35, and hypoalbuminemia as a single disclosed species.

If the election requirement is maintained, it will be clear on the record that the PTO considers the groups to be patentably distinct from one another *i.e.*, *prima facie non-obvious* from one another. This means that a reference identical to the one group would not render the other group *prima facie obvious*.

Appln. No. 10/629,838
Amd. dated January 3, 2007
Reply to Office Action of November 7, 2006

Favorable consideration and examination of all pending claims on the merits are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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